

Re: Current Situation in Ukraine

Source: Tourist to Ukraine, July 1970

Date: 3 August 1970

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY  
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 3B2B  
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT  
DATE 2007

1. Source visited the USSR from 11 July thru 31 July 1970, during which time she was in Leningrad, Moscow, Lviv, Sochi and Kiev. Source is an American student of Ukrainian descent from New York City, in her early twenties. She travelled by air with a tourist group organized by Kowbasniuk Travel Agency.
2. While in Lviv, Source met with her cousin who is a music teacher, during their conversations he told Source the following information:
3. During 1969 and 1970 while the Lenin centennial celebrations were taking place in Lviv, there were frequent incidents where unknown individuals would deface posters of Lenin during the night. Some posters had blindfolds drawn over Lenin's eyes, and on statues of Lenin, various compromising to the regime items were placed in Lenin's hands. There was one incident where a dunce cap was placed on Lenin's head on a statue. None of the "culprits" have been found by the police.
4. In December of 1969 a Christmas tree was erected in front of the Lviv Opera theater. This tree was erected with the approval of the authorities, however, when the government decided to take it down on the 1st of January 1970, students began protesting and the tree remained in place until the 14th of January, the date of Ukrainian Christmas.
5. Source's cousin was familiar with a group of his friends who in 1967 periodically held meetings to read the latest Ukrainian literature, and old books printed in Western Ukraine before the Soviet occupation. This group of friends would discuss these books and touch upon topics dealing with Ukrainian independence. After a few months, this group was arrested by the KGB. Source's cousin escaped arrest because he did not frequent their meetings regularly, he feels that the group was infiltrated by the KGB and this led to their arrests. In the group were a total of 10-15 persons.
6. In 1967 in Lviv there was a massive demonstration by the population protesting the high price of sausage. These demonstrations took place on the streets and were dispersed by the police. Some persons taking part in the demonstration were <sup>persecuted</sup> ~~used~~ by the government.
7. Source's cousin knew about arrests of Ukrainian writers and intellectuals <sup>(in 1965-1966)</sup> but was unaware of who was arrested and when. Source informed him of the latest facts pertaining to this.
8. Prices in Lviv are very high, and the only readily available goods for consumption are bread and potatoes. During the 7 day stay in Lviv, Subject did

not see any meat at all. While in Kiev, she was given some meager slices of meat in a restaurant.

9. In Kiev Source went into a bookstore located on Khreschatyk St. between Shevchenko Blvd. and Lenin St. This bookstore is located next to a store which sells cheese. Inside the bookstore, Subject ~~met~~ the salesgirl and they began a conversation. This salesgirl was Ukrainian in her early twenties. When the salesgirl found out that ~~Subject~~ <sup>Source</sup> was from USA and spoke Ukrainian, she became quite friendly and wanted to talk with Source. This girl recommended that Source read "Mal'vy" by Roman Ivanychuk of Lviv, adding that this novel is presently very popular in Ukraine, but is almost impossible to obtain. All better books are printed in very small editions and are immediately sold out. When asked by Source if she would like to visit the USA and live there, the salesgirl replied that her role was in Ukraine, for it was there that she could work to correct the wrongs taking place. Another author who is very much in demand in Ukraine at present is Sklyarenko, while in the bookstore, ~~Source~~ <sup>Subject</sup> noticed that many customers were asking for his works, but they were not available.

10. In Kiev Source met a young man who constantly spoke Russian with her, even though he claimed that he was Ukrainian. When asked why he spoke Russian, he replied: "In what language does everyone else talk to you in Kiev?" After a while, this young man showed Source a badge and told her that he was a militia man, but presently off duty. He explained that the militia is under orders to behave very well towards tourists, since they are considered "diplomats".

11. Source was not subjected to any search by the Soviet customs officers neither on arrival nor departure. However at least 3 persons from the USA in this same group had their suitcases and handbags thoroughly searched.